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# Talking and Listening

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# Talking and Listening

**Loma Linda University Assessment for Diversity:  
a two-year report, 1992-93 and 1993-94**

*Diversity issues  
at Loma Linda  
University:  
Student views,  
strategies for  
change, and  
recommendations*

Office of Diversity, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California

## DEDICATION

Dr. Charlie Liu (1954-1994)

LLU Campus Chaplain  
Member, Diversity Survey Task Force  
Member, LLU Diversity Steering Committee

“He modeled diversity.”



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*"... in order to understand and serve the diverse groups on campus, one must first listen to them."*

## FOREWORD

Loma Linda University, a Seventh-day Adventist health sciences institution of higher education, is firmly committed to the goals of diversity. On the campus, where more than 80 countries are represented, diversity refers to the attitudes and actions that value, respect and include all groups that make up the varied campus family. The actions of administrators, faculty and staff seek to facilitate a Christian environment where true integration, rather than assimilation, is the goal of diversity.

From its origin in 1905, LLU's mission has been "to make man whole." Wholeness includes ministering to and serving the needs of its diverse constituency, be they matriculating students, faculty, staff or its vast alumni. Fulfilling the mission is a priority of the LLU Board of Trustees, the faculty, staff and administration. However, the mission cannot be fully realized unless the principles of diversity are incorporated in all aspects of campus life. This means that all groups—regardless of their ethnicity, culture, gender, religion and physical condition—are valued, respected and included.

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) states that "quality and diversity have come to be profoundly connected in pursuing goals that are explicit in the mission statement of colleges and universities themselves: goals of expanding knowledge, educating capable citizens and serving public needs." The LLU diversity program is consonant with this position and understands diversity to be intertwined with quality education and Christian commitment.

Almost two years ago the LLU Board voted to establish a new office that would have diversity as its primary focus. The office was established, and Dr. Delbert W. Baker was selected to lead the department. While there is yet much that remains to be done, already the campus is realizing positive strides in this area.

It is Dr. Baker's and my conviction that in order to understand and serve the diverse groups on campus, one must first listen to them. Research and the practices of many other institutions bear out that emphasis on communication exchange is critical to a vibrant diversity program. This then is the purpose of the LLU *Assessment for Diversity Student Survey*. This instrument allows the students to share their views on the subject of diversity. The results allows the Board, administration, faculty and staff an opportunity to listen.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the fine work of Dr. Baker, the diversity committees, the LLU Center for Health Research, the deans and the team that administered, collected and analyzed this data. It has taken hard work, dedication and commitment to bring it to this present state.

It is my sincere wish and intent that the information from this report will be used to further the goals and mission of Loma Linda University.

B. Lyn Behrens, MB, BS  
President

eration among the various groups represented within the institution. One important goal is the strengthening of collegiality that, in turn, encourages vigorous debate and the examination of competing ideas. Such collegiality becomes impossible where there is domination of members of one group by members of another or the systemic neglect of the perspectives and aspirations of the members of any group on campus." However, in response to the concerns of private institutions, like LLU, the Commission Standards affirms that "religious institutions have the right to select students and faculty on the basis of adherence to religious faith."

*Third, group membership and identification impacts the individual and the content/organization of academic scholarship and study. This dimension concerns the extent to which group differences and affiliations should be recognized and affirmed by colleges and universities.*" In higher education dilemmas often arise "with respect to group membership and whether the recognition of group membership contributes to academic and community-building goals." This aspect of diversity stresses integration not assimilation. "The negotiation of new relationships among individuals and groups is under way, and these changes produce a good deal of the controversy that accompanies diversity. Such changes are often awkward and sometimes difficult. But these changes also bring new intellectual challenges and can contribute greatly to educational quality by offering a more profound understanding of ourselves and our world and an education of greater relevance to participants in a multicultural society."

### Quality Education and Diversity

Quality education is the goal of institutions of higher education. The WASC Commission on Diversity closely associated "quality education" with diversity. "Discussions of quality in higher education are often dominated by measures such as student scores on examinations . . . examinations for entrance into professional schools, the proportion of applicants refused admission, endowment per student, or the reputation of faculty members in individual disciplines. As measures of the quality of teaching and learning . . . these measures are plainly inadequate."

The commission points out that when the meaning of educational quality is examined at a deeper level, the connection between quality and diversity becomes clearly important:

1. *A quality education introduces students to the richness of the intellectual world and broadens the range of scientific and cultural topics on which students can exercise discernment, logic and balanced judgment.*

Efforts to expand the multicultural horizons of the student have a positive and substantial effect on the methodology of liberal arts subjects and certain professional fields such as law, medicine and business.

2. *A quality education helps students acquire the habit of critical analysis of data, assumptions and argument.* It is therefore of educational value when students, through classroom instruction, study and interaction with students and faculty of diverse backgrounds, learn to evaluate differing points of view. Immersion in an environment of diverse and competing ideas is important to the development of independent thought.

3. *A quality education prepares a student to grasp and respond constructively to persons, ideas, situations and challenges novel to his or her experience.* Today's students will live in a society, and quite likely in a locality,

WASC is quick to note  
that assessment tasks are  
“complex and difficult  
[but that they] can bring  
experiences and percep-  
tions to the surface and  
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suggestions.”

## The Purpose of a Diversity Assessment

In the minds of many educators diversity is an essential component of quality education. However, those who may understand the importance of diversity appreciate its benefits and seriously want to see progress are often faced with perplexing questions: “How does an institution assess the strengths and weaknesses of its efforts to make diversity integral to plans for institutional improvement?” “What plans should be developed; what are the steps to be taken?” and “How will the institution assess its diversity efforts over time?”

Answers to these questions are not simple. Recruitment and retention statistics and other quantitative data are part of the answer. They can shed light on what is working and what is not, but they are limited in that they show facts and trends but cannot gauge what people are thinking and feeling. LLU’s experience identifies campus diversity assessments to be helpful sources of information in answering the above questions; thus, the *LLU Assessment for Diversity Student Surveys (1992-93 and 1993-94)*. Though the surveys are not the only source of information guiding the diversity program, they do provide immediate insight into the thinking of persons affected by diversity—students, faculty and staff.

The WASC Commission on Diversity identifies three benefits of conducting a diversity assessment: 1) it allows the comparison of “data over time” and the examination of “trends in individual schools and departments as well as the campus as a whole”; 2) it provides the tools to probe beneath the numbers to “illuminate individual perceptions and patterns of interaction among the members of various groups”; and 3) it provides a means for an institution to conduct “systematic assessments of how different students, faculty and staff view their experiences on campus [i.e. campus climate].”

The desire for objective insight into the thinking of the students led to the creation of the two versions of the student surveys, *LLU Assessment for Diversity*. This same desire for objective insight is behind plans to conduct a similar survey to examine the perceptions of faculty concerning diversity. While WASC urges educational institutions to assess the diversity climate on campus, it is quick to note that the assessment tasks are “complex and difficult.” However, they reason that the “questionnaires and small group meetings of students, staff and faculty from different backgrounds can bring such experiences and perceptions [the hope and belief that diversity progress is possible] to the surface and can serve as the source of creative suggestions.”

## The LLU Assessment for Diversity

More than 800 students in 1992-93, and more than 930 students in 1993-94—out of a student body of almost 3,000—completed the *LLU Assessment for Diversity*. All six schools and each of the targeted ethnic groups were adequately represented, resulting in statistically reliable and valid data.

In particular the survey was administered to 1) assess the strengths and challenges of diversity from the perspective of the student body; 2) better understand and respond to the needs of a diverse student body; and 3) obtain an objective measure of the campus’ climate for diversity to effectively evaluate progress in the coming years. This survey addresses policies, programs, practices, attitudes and expectations as areas which can profoundly impact student relationships, scholarship and world view. This analysis of the data has



## CHAPTER 2: INFORMATION AND STATISTICS

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**LLU ASSESSMENT FOR DIVERSITY**  
**SURVEY DESIGN SUMMARY (1992-93)/(1993-94)**

**Survey Content Areas:** Background Information, Experiences at LLU, General Climate, Perceptions of Faculty, Role Models and Mentoring, Student Interaction, School/Departmental Climate, Diversity Awareness, Attitudes, Possible Solutions, Open-Ended Questions.

	<i>Number of Survey Respondents (LLU Totals):</i>		<i>Percent of Students Who Responded:</i>	
	<i>1992-93</i>	<i>1993-94</i>	<i>1992-93</i>	<i>1993-94</i>
<b>Responding Students:</b>	837 (2821)	933 (2875)	29.7	32.5
<b>By School:</b>				
Allied Health Professions	82 (760)	130 (734)	10.8	17.7
Dentistry	280 (420)	239 (411)	66.5	58.2
Graduate	131 (345)	80 (231)	38.0	34.6
Medicine	188 (620)	275 (650)	30.3	42.3
Nursing	112 (262)	170 (260)	42.7	65.4
Public Health	36 (413)	36 (270)	8.7	13.3
No response		8	3	
<b>By Race:</b>				
American Indian	—	4 (8)	—	50.0
Asian	239 (694)	262 (562)	34.4	46.6
African American/Black	35 (142)	34 (109)	24.6	31.2
Caucasian/White	453 (1684)	472 (1562)	26.9	30.2
Hispanic	50 (193)	65 (220)	25.8	29.5
Other	42 (176)	17 (77)	23.9	22.1
No response		18	79	
<b>By Gender:</b>				
Female	500 (1583)	94 (1633)	31.6	30.3
Male	334 (1237)	434 (1242)	27.0	34.9
No response		3	405	
<b>Median Age:</b>	26.5	26.7		
<b>By Religion:</b>				
SDA	478 (1570)	585 (1569)	30.4	37.3
Non-SDA	345 (1251)	348 (1312)	27.6	26.5
No response		14		
<b>By Citizenship:</b>				
U.S.	637 (2178)	753 (2325)	29.5	32.4
Foreign	149 (643)	180 (550)	23.2	32.7
No response		51		

*Comments: The 1992-93 survey contained 15 demographic questions and 208 diversity questions (see Appendix Section D). The 1993-94 survey contained 9 demographic questions and 68 diversity questions (see Appendix Section E).*

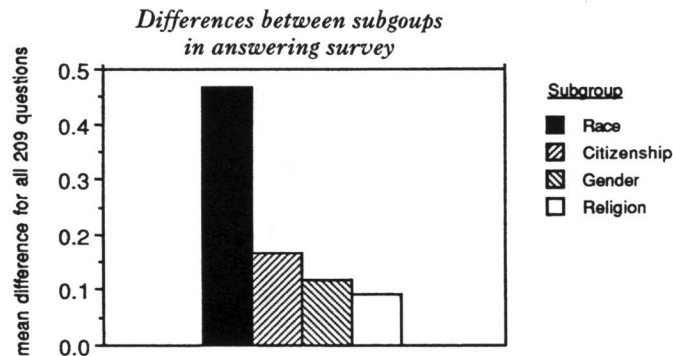
on campus. This score was one of the best given in the survey. Under-represented and “other” students rated faculty lower than represented students. And, “insensitive and disparaging comments” were heard slightly more often from students than from faculty, staff and administrators.

- **The highest rated solutions to achieving greater diversity were:** 1) providing services for inner-city children; 2) supporting programs for students who are academically challenged; 3) admitting applicants without regard to race/ethnicity; and 4) providing more multicultural campus events, especially distinguished speakers or visiting scholars of racial/ethnic minorities.
- **Campus publications were highly rated by students as being free of offensive material.** Materials offensive to other religions was rated slightly lower.
- **The students of individual schools within LLU had remarkably different, sometimes opposing perceptions of campus diversity issues.** Questions which referred to the students’ program, department, faculty, or administration showed a marked difference between the schools in their support, sensitivity and commitment to diversity. This difference was among the greatest observed in this study, often as much as one full point on a four-point scale. Many of these differences correspond with the general public’s perception of those professions. Other questions showed up as significantly different between schools for reasons which relate more to the gender or racial makeup of the student body within those schools.
- **Majority students felt that LLU adequately represents the cultural diversity of the United States,** despite the fact that statistics show otherwise. They also believed that LLU has achieved a positive climate for diversity, and in some instances that LLU is placing too much emphasis on diversity, leading to disunity and underprepared students and possibly compromising its prestige in society.
- **Minority students felt that LLU does not adequately represent the cultural diversity of the United States.** Black students felt that the goal of LLU to at least match the diversity in the U.S. is a reasonable one. They felt that LLU should place more emphasis on the subject of diversity and that such an emphasis will increase the positive spirit of diversity on campus and increase its prestige in society.
- **Graduate School, Nursing, and Public Health students all rated their programs as very receptive to integrating ethnic/gender issues into courses, as compared with students from Medicine and Dentistry, who gave their schools very low ratings.** Graduate School, Allied Health, and Nursing students rated “disparaging comments about women by faculty” as occurring much less commonly than did students from Medicine or Dentistry. Graduate School was generally rated the best of all schools in issues relative to diversity.

- **In spite of the length of the survey, the overwhelming majority of students filled out the open-ended questions at the end of the survey** which offered the opportunity to share views and ideas about diversity as ultimately being beneficial to all groups. While there was a variety of opinion for and against the various diversity initiatives, there was a consistent theme in the responses that indicated a lack of understanding as to the purpose and objective of diversity. Most students who responded positively to diversity indicated positive reasons for why they thought diversity was an asset. Comments that indicated a less than favorable attitude to diversity presented diversity as a burden and a strain. These students gave no indication of understanding diversity to be a help to their educational experience or professional preparation, or that they understood it to be a part of quality education. The students' views toward diversity seemed to be colored by the personal benefits they perceived diversity offered.
- **The majority of students—regardless of race/ethnicity—indicated a desire to interact with and learn more about people of other ethnic groups and cultures and to progress in multicultural relations.** Students wanted “more programs that recognized distinctive cultural heritages or diverse lifestyle”; “more awareness/sensitivity workshops or programs to help students/ faculty become more aware of the needs of racial/ethnic minorities, women, people with disabilities and diverse religions”; “to diversify the faculty [in general], and to recruit and hire LLU’s own minority and women graduates and graduates with disabilities”; “to include ‘service that enhances the LLU climate for diversity’ as one of the criteria for staff and faculty evaluation”; and “to encourage faculty to incorporate research and perspectives on aging, people with disabilities, racial/ethnic minorities and women.”
- **Students supported active educational programs but opposed “quotas” as possible solutions to diversity challenges.** Students favored diversity programming that emphasizes academic support and broadened exposure to issues of diversity, while being strongly opposed to diversity programming that emphasizes quotas or segregation. There seemed to be no adverse reaction to the idea of diversity goals if the objectives were rational and based on real need. Students felt that the answer to the challenges of diversity lies in education/ training, faculty support of diversity principles, activities facilitating multicultural activities, recruiting and retaining underrepresented students and bringing in minorities as faculty, staff or instructors and visiting guest speakers and lecturers.
- **The majority of students wanted “events on campus that bring together members of different racial, religious and disabled and non-disabled people.”**



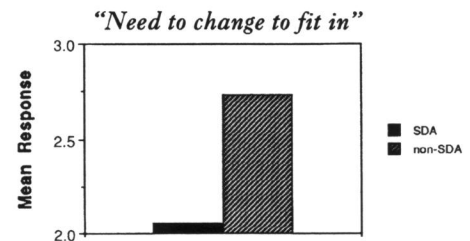
ship or gender groups. Students identified cultural or racial issues to be more sensitive than religious issues in this survey.



*Question 17H:* SDA students rated the campus as more religiously tolerant than did non-SDA students.

*Question 21B:* SDA students preferred classes from faculty of similar religious backgrounds more often than did non-SDA students.

*Question 27J:* Non-SDA students were much more likely to feel the need to change personal characteristics in order to “fit in.”



### C. Questions answered differently depending on citizenship:

*Question 18B5:* Foreign students were more likely than were U.S. students to rate faculty as less sensitive to issues of age than to issues of ethnicity, race, or religion.

*Questions 21A, E:* Foreign students were more likely than were U.S. students to state a preference for faculty of similar racial/ethnic background, and felt that minority faculty were more helpful than were other faculty.

*Questions 28R, T, D, E:* Foreign citizens were much more likely than were U.S. citizens to rate money-related options (financial incentives, hiring and promotional policies, special programs and funding organizations) as desirable solutions for recruiting underrepresented faculty, staff, and students. Of the top 20 questions generating the greatest difference in response between U.S. and foreign students, 16 were from the section “Possible Solutions.”



*Questions 16 O, P:* Asian students were more likely than were any other group, including Caucasians, to feel that LLU events had portrayed any group (minorities, whites, women, men, disabled persons) in a positive manner, although they felt no differently than underrepresented racial groups about negative portrayals.

*Question 16Q:* Hispanic students were the most likely group to study with members of another racial/ethnic group.

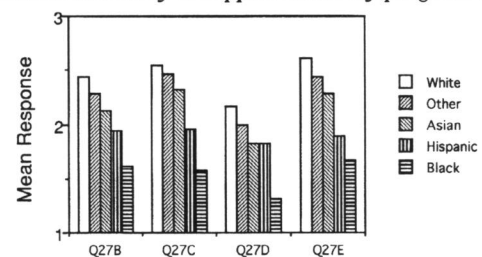
*Questions 16S, T, U:* Other students were the most likely to feel that University or student publications had been offensive to some group, but were no more likely to feel that way about racially offensive material than material offensive in other ways.

*Questions 17, 18:* Underrepresented groups rated LLU lower in all areas of general climate, including areas related to gender, religion, and disability sensitivity, not just areas related to racial climate.

*Question 21A-E:* Underrepresented groups were much more likely to prefer faculty of similar ethnic/racial *and* religious backgrounds, and to feel that these faculty are more sensitive, give more attention and address issues of greater relevance.

*Questions 25A, B, D, 27B-E, K, L:* Caucasian students felt that LLU adequately represents the cultural diversity of the U.S., has achieved a positive climate for diversity and, in some instances, that LLU is placing too much emphasis on diversity, leading to disunity, underprepared students and a loss of prestige for the University.

*Whites less likely to support diversity programs*



*Questions 28O, P:* Other students were more likely to approve of reserving special sections of residence halls for individuals of similar religious and/or ethnic/racial backgrounds, although this option was rated as one of the poorest by all other racial/ethnic groups.

*Question 28S:* All racial/ethnic groups, without exception, believed that applicants should be admitted to LLU without regard to race or ethnicity.

#### **F. Questions answered differently depending on school attended:**

This section was the most difficult to analyze because of the number of schools involved and the lack of any ability to make generalizations to aid in the analysis.

among all groups. Nursing students gave higher marks than did all other students for their administration.

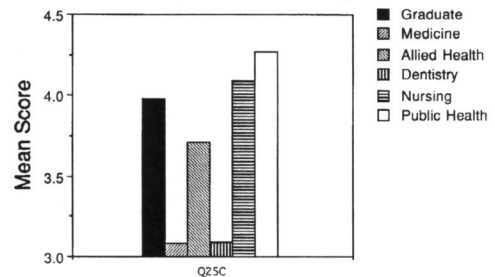
*Question 18B2:* Graduate School and Nursing students believed strongly that their faculty are sensitive to issues of concern to women.

*Question 22E:* Medicine students were much less likely to feel adequately mentored than were any other students on campus.

*Questions 25A, C:* Graduate School, Nursing and Public Health students all rated their programs as very receptive to integrating ethnic/gender issues into courses, compared with very low ratings by Medicine and Dentistry students. *This question showed the greatest school-related difference identified in this survey.*

Programs which rated high in being receptive to ethnic or gender issues also rated high in overall emphasis of the importance of diversity.

*Openness of programs to ethnic/gender issues*



*Question 25D:* Public Health, Nursing, Graduate School and Allied Health (in that order) students gave faculty high marks for sensitivity to needs and concerns of the students. School of Medicine faculty received the lowest marks in this area.

*Questions 27C, D, E:* Graduate School students were least likely to believe that diversity leads to campus disunity, admission of underprepared students or hiring of less qualified faculty; Medicine students were more likely to believe that these are all negative aspects of diversity programming.

*Question 27L:* Public Health students were much more likely to feel that LLU has achieved a positive climate for diversity.

*Questions 28A, G1, W, X, etc.:* Public Health students were most likely to support solutions which emphasized education and interaction across racial/cultural/ethnic boundaries.

*Questions 28T1, T2:* Graduate students were most likely to strongly support special programs or services for women and racial/ethnic minorities.

*"...The University must be willing to provide not only the leadership but the resources and the institutional framework for this process. The University must state unequivocally the goal...to prepare students for effective leadership in a multicultural society."*

*Stanford University  
Committee on  
Minority Issues, 1989*

- It is the most diverse institution I have attended. As a Caucasian, I find it to be a nice change. LLU must be given credit for its success in the area of diversity. Keeping the dialogue open, as evidenced by this questionnaire, indicates progress in an already progressive environment in terms of diversity. The questions alone spark awareness in the individual and may be the most beneficial aspect of the survey.
- Race has been a problem, it is a problem and it will probably always be a problem. What is the answer? I think a diversity program will help, but it sure will take more than one office and some committees. It will take everyone—all of the schools and deans and students and every other person working on this campus. It will not happen quickly, but if we keep with it, it can happen. Don't give up. If we believe that this is the right thing to do then nothing should stop us from giving it the best we can give. Plus this is what God would want us to do.
- I think it is rather diverse as it is. African Americans and Hispanics are the most underrepresented and they must be prepared before dentistry (grade school + high school) in order to change the "mix" at LLU.

### 3. Diversity: Unfavorable

- Do not try to get a perfect cross culture population representative of the U.S. population. LLU is not representative of the entire U.S.
- Too much time and money is distracted to it. Give it a rest! I think it's worsening the whole problem when you start singling groups out. And I say this as a double minority, Hispanic, low income woman!
- Diversity is too big of an issue and too much time and effort are put into it!! (Go ahead and say that this is just my "white-male arrogance" but it's time that the effort spent on diversity could be invested productively in something else!)
- I feel the diversity issue is a dead horse here at LLU. Other problems such as financial, housing, parking are more relevant to us now. We (as far as I can see) all are doing fine with each other no matter what racial, ethnic or cultural background we're from.
- Let us get off this issue. I don't understand what the problem is. Every where you look on this campus, there are "minority" students. In fact they are the majority.

### 4. Gender

- I think women in general suffer the most insidious and unrecognized discrimination/harassment.
- Treating everyone equally would be great. A few faculty members tend to treat and favor the female gender more than the males. It's hard to compete against someone the opposite sex [...].

then training them for positions that they can make the best contribution in. White people shouldn't have a problem with that because minorities are underrepresented and quality is not being sacrificed.

- I believe the hiring of more minority administrators and course coordinators (not just occasional guest lecturers) will serve to heighten sensitivity to minority concerns. For example if more women lecturers were present in our courses, I'm sure insensitive comments about women would be made less. Also, with more minority lecturers, we who are minorities will feel inspired and encouraged—by the other minority doctors who have succeeded.

## 7. Suggestions and Solutions: Other

- More diverse faculty. In the two years here I have had only two courses which had a female instructor as part of the team. I have had no courses with Black, Hispanic or disabled instructors as part of the team. Our students need to see more examples of diversity in role model positions. Perhaps invite these people to chapel and they could share their experiences.
- Faculty, staff, administrators can model openness and acceptance. Forcing and contriving a climate of openness and acceptance won't work to improve relations among various groups. More exposure to inner-city projects and other disadvantaged groups can provide a picture of life and attitudes that no class can provide. Students often will address their attitudes, prejudices and biases better when dealing with them directly in the field, and opportunity for discussion afterwards.
- Ask for God's intervention. He can give us some help in this difficult situation.
- Stop talking about it and just do it.

*... I envision diversity increasing at LLU in a way that will enhance the ability of the University to serve the needs of our students, our church, and the local, national and worldwide communities. This attitude and approach to diversity, I believe, is intrinsic to the mission and purpose of LLU."*

*B. Lyn Behrens, MB, BS  
President*

**Implication:** New thought needs to be given to how to talk—educate and train—about diversity in terms that are relevant and meaningful to nonminority students. Otherwise, the very initiatives that seek to bring about new levels of understanding and collaboration can cause resentment in the minds of important segments on the campus. There will always be some dissonance and ambivalence about a subject so volatile as the various aspects of race. Nevertheless, the educational process is failing in a significant area if it fails to educate the student to the positive ways that diversity can enrich and broaden one's life.

4. **Finding (Perception Groupings):** Negative and positive perceptions about diversity uniformly varied according to racial groups. In fact, there were greater differences according to race than there were according to religion. Students tended to see things in a more similar fashion according to their race and ethnicity rather than their religion. The two most divergent groups were Blacks (the most underrepresented) and Whites (the most represented). For example, according to the findings of both surveys (1992-93 and 1993-94), a White SDA student was more aligned on the subject of diversity with a White Catholic than with a Black SDA. In the same way, a Black SDA student was more aligned with a Black non-Adventist than he/she was with a White SDA student.

**Implication:** Diversity is not necessarily seen as a religious or moral issue. This allows LLU an excellent opportunity to develop multicultural programs for understanding, create crosscultural dialogue and build bridges among these and other groups on campus. Clearly there is need for communication and a moral or spiritual context in which to present the subject. The groups did not express hate or even extreme dislike of each other. Rather they showed ignorance or ambivalence. Here is perhaps one of the serendipitous benefits of the survey. It not only provided data that revealed this phenomenon, it also helped to create awareness in the process. Many students expressed a new awareness of the subject of diversity and their need to make progress. Perhaps the student clubs and associations on campus can help to be part of the solution now that the problem is more clear.

5. **Finding (Representation):** Underrepresented students at LLU often felt discriminated against, poorly represented and without adequate mentoring and role models. These same students felt the need to have members of their own race represented in the administration, faculty and staff.

**Implication:** This need could be effectively addressed if more aggressive efforts were taken by the administration of the University and schools to bring about more diversity, as quickly as possible, among the administration, faculty and staff of the University. This area was identified as being of great importance to minority students in the process of fitting into the educational environment.

6. **Finding (Faculty):** The series of questions 16 I through 16M asked students if they recalled faculty (staff and administration were ranked in similar fashion) making insensitive or disparaging comments about racial/ethnic

*"More attention should be given to the unique educational benefits that diversity brings to students, faculty, staff and administrators, be they from a minority or majority group. The perspective that diversity is an essential component of quality in education is relatively novel but very important in an educational institution. It supplements the imperatives of affirmative action in a way that is most appropriate and helpful to educational institutions . . .*

However, similar assumptions are seldom made about White students who gather by themselves. These differences in attitudes and perceptions only add to campus tension. They can, however, be addressed through education, training and interaction between and among different racial/ethnic groups.

9. **Finding (Campus Climate):** When given a choice, the majority of students felt that the LLU climate was:

Friendly over hostile;  
 Communicative over reserved (*close margin*);  
 Concerned over indifferent (*close margin*);  
 Respectful over disrespectful;  
 Cooperative over uncooperative;  
 Competitive over noncompetitive;  
 Improving over worsening;  
 Tolerant to religion over intolerant (*close margin*);  
 Accessible to the disabled over inaccessible (*close margin*);  
 Hospitable to the disabled over inhospitable;  
 Nonracist over racist.

**Implication:** While students generally perceived LLU to be a pleasant environment, the survey indicated that minorities have a lower view of its amiability. In general, there are areas where LLU is clearly affirmed, and also some challenging areas in which LLU can improve.

10. **Finding (Schools and Departments):** Students had decided opinions about diversity as it exists in their school and department. They felt their program emphasized the importance of diversity in their profession (66%) but felt there was a need for more diversity in their school program (76%). The overwhelming majority of students (83%) believed that the top administration in their school should be genuinely committed to promoting respect for and understanding of group differences at LLU. More than half (60%) believed that their school administration was "genuinely committed to promoting respect for and understanding of group differences." However, a fifth of the students (20%) believed that the school did not actively seek to recruit underrepresented students. More than a fourth of the students (28%) felt they did not know enough about what their school was doing in the area of diversity to be able to judge.

**Implication:** Thorough and systematic communication (from the administration, faculty and diversity committees) is needed to inform the students about diversity and about the efforts on the part of the school to train and educate about diversity. Students will judge the importance of diversity by the emphasis, resources and energy given it by faculty, staff and administration.

11. **Finding (Areas to Improve):** Approximately 50% of the students felt there should be improvement in the following areas relative to diversity at LLU:



## CHAPTER 7: STRATEGIC QUESTIONS FOR CHANGE

The students in each of the six schools of Loma Linda University are different and often see things differently. In fact, each of the six schools could be said to have student groups that differ in important ways. Each school exists under its own unique set of circumstances, conditions, mission and history. Any solution that might be proposed would need to be specific to each individual school to be useful. *The school itself* is in the best position to examine its own situation periodically and take steps to deal with relevant issues.

The strategy here is to pose questions to the administration and faculty of the LLU schools that will help facilitate the best course of action toward achieving a balanced approach to diversity, given their own set of unique circumstances. Outcome is the ultimate goal. Many of these issues are addressed in the LLU Diversity *Profile* Program report and in the LLU Strategic Plan (diversity section). However, all of the questions need to be addressed at the highest administrative, faculty and staff levels in each of the schools and auxiliary services on the LLU campus. Therefore this survey report, and these questions in particular, can serve as a catalyst for further meaningful thought, discussion and action relative to effective diversity action.

### STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- Do the administration, faculty and staff have a clear understanding of the goals, objectives and challenges of the LLU diversity program? Are they regularly encouraged to positively and creatively share this understanding with their classes and colleagues?
- Do your school administration, faculty and staff understand the WASC perspective on diversity? Do they have a working knowledge of the principles of diversity and do they see diversity as an important component of quality education?
- Does your school have clearly stated policies and goals that spell out the commitment to diversify your school, to act affirmatively in seeking to achieve ethnic parity and to eliminate discrimination and/or racism in all of its forms? Are these articulations as thoughtful and compassionate as they are decided and intentional?
- Have reasonable and measurable goals been developed that will clearly guide all subsequent efforts to increase underrepresented administrative, faculty, staff and student presence and participation? Have these goals been widely accepted and bought into by the entire school family—from the administrative, faculty, staff and student levels?
- Have all units within the academic, administrative and social structure established objectives and actions that support the LLU diversity goals and objectives?

*"All Americans... would benefit from an educational system that produced informed citizens.... Education isn't just a service we obtain for our own daughters, and sons and grandchildren. It is a public good, after defense perhaps our most important form of common provision and, in a sense, itself a defense against the ills that plague us at home...."*



by the recruiter and admission counselors of what they can expect upon attending your school?

- Do you know what sources of information students use in making the decision to attend your school? Do these sources differ in number or degree between students (e.g. between Black and White students)? If so, what are these differences? Is this knowledge being used to improve the recruitment of underrepresented students?
- Does your school use the *Assessment for Diversity Survey* results that reveal student opinions and perceptions about the campus climate for diversity? Is there a plan to administratively reflect on and plan with this data in view?
- Is there a formal means of providing underrepresented students with opportunity to let the administrators and faculty know how they feel about their experiences on campus?
- Does your school facilitate dialogue between different ethnic groups for the purpose of raising sensitivity, education and improved race relations?
- Does your school make conscious efforts to include underrepresented students in the planning and organization of academic and social activities in your school? Is there a conscious effort to facilitate diversity among programming and the program participants? Are these efforts working?
- Is your school making every effort to recruit minority students, faculty and administrators? Are such efforts well publicized? Are your students—of all ethnic groups—convinced of your sincerity?
- Are there plans in motion to raise the consciousness of the faculty and staff relative to the findings of this report and its bearing on diversity programming in your school? And, are the dean, faculty advisory or administrative committees incorporating the findings of this report and of the LLU Diversity *Profile* Program report.

Adapted from *Racial Issues On Campus: How Students View Them*, Southern Regional Education Board, 1990.



... The perceptions an organization has about diversity will immediately impact on how it is able to manage diversity to positive ends. Is diversity viewed as an opportunity for growth and enrichment or as a stumbling block to be avoided? An institution will do well to study this question because the answer will make a difference.

LLU Diversity Survey  
Taskforce, 1994

## Validity of the New Survey

We are pleased to report that the results of the original 1992-93 *Assessment for Diversity Student Survey* findings were deemed to be consistent and valid by the 1993-94 findings. The majority of the questions showed no significant change from last year's survey. In fact, more than half of the questions showed less than 2% variation between the mean scores of each survey. This occurrence verifies the fact that these two surveys do indeed accurately reflect the diversity perceptions of LLU students.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1993-94 survey results indicated that the LLU diversity program is moving in a positive direction. Overall, student perceptions either remained the same as, or, in some areas, were more positive than last year. This, of course, underlies the need for careful attention to be given to the 1992-93 concerns outlined in this report as being the areas needing attention in programming and strategic planning for the University. In short, the challenges relevant to the needs in diversity remained as they were reported last year. Of the questions which did show significant variation from 1992-93, several stood out as clear evidence of the impact of recent diversity programming. The following summaries are generalizations of the responses given by students in the survey:

**Students—underrepresented as well as represented—felt more positive about their relationship to the faculty, staff and administration and felt they had more role models.** The students felt they had better mentoring in 1993-94 than in 1992-93. This perceptual shift toward role models and mentoring is the most significant of the changes comparing results from the 1993-94 school term to the preceding one (increase from 2.690 to 3.000). This positive shift may be explained because of the effort on the part of the administration, deans and the Office of Diversity to create an awareness of the need for positive role models among faculty, students, staff, and administration. Positive perceptions toward diversity relationships in all ethnic groups increased. However, Whites and Hispanics increased the most, with Black students showing an incremental increase. This finding indicates that perceptions are moving in the right direction. Why is this happening? It can be argued that all schools on campus are giving increased emphasis to the subject of diversity and the need to be more sensitive to the various student groups. One way to change perceptions in this area is to hire more faculty from underrepresented groups. This is happening, as well. The number of minority faculty and staff, however, has not increased significantly enough to account for the current perception shift. Conceivably with the

